

# Connecticut Energy Efficiency Board (EEB)

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

### Consultant on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to the CT Energy Efficiency Board

#### Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION .....	1
WORK SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	3
APPLICANT EXPECTATIONS .....	3
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS .....	5
RFP INFORMATION .....	5
RFP TIMELINE .....	6

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

##### RFP Summary

Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas Service Company (both d/b/a Eversource Energy), The United Illuminating Company (UI), Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG), and Connecticut Natural Gas (CNG), collectively the Utilities, are soliciting a **Request for Proposals (RFP) on behalf of the State of Connecticut Energy Efficiency Board for a Consultant on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) starting February 1, 2022 to assist in ongoing efforts to enhance equity in Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024.** The DEI Consultant will report to the Energy Efficiency Board, working closely with the Board’s Technical Consultants, Evaluation Administrator, and EEB Consultant Committee, as well as the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Utilities, and other stakeholders.

The RFP is posted on the [Energize CT website](#) under RFPs.

##### About the Energy Efficiency Board

The State of Connecticut [Energy Efficiency Board](#) (“EEB”), established by CT General Statutes Section 16-245m, is seeking a Consultant to advance the EEB’s commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The EEB oversees the ratepayer-funded conservation and load management programs and initiatives administered by the electric and gas utility distribution companies and advises municipal utilities charged with implementing conservation and load management programs. As a seventeen-member board, the EEB includes representatives from

governmental agencies, business and residential consumer groups, non-profit organizations, and the utilities. The EEB reports annually to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) and to the General Assembly.

Connecticut is a leading state in energy efficiency, demand response, and load management programs – labeled “Conservation and Load Management,” or “C&LM” in state statute. The Connecticut C&LM programs under the [Energize CT](#) umbrella seek to achieve deep and comprehensive energy and demand savings that benefit the full breadth of customer sectors, market segments, and the state as a whole through a wide variety of programs and market strategies that address all fuels. These extensive program efforts are pursued with a focus on leveraging ratepayer money used to fund the programs and advancing market-based strategies to achieve the savings and other benefits.

### **Equitable Energy Efficiency (E3) Proceeding Background**

In September 2020, DEEP launched the Equitable Energy Efficiency (E3) Proceeding to define equity in the context of the C&LM programs within DEEP’s purview, develop specific metrics to identify underserved customer demographics, and expand the inclusion and participation of individuals from underserved communities in those programs. After receiving public comments on the scope and process of the E3 Proceeding, DEEP issued a [Determination](#) in July 2021 that included eight high-level Goals and several associated Actions that seek to characterize the current state of equity in Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs while taking short-term actions to address known equity challenges and barriers. This constituted the start of the first phase in what will be a multi-phased, iterative process to enhance equity in C&LM programs.

#### **The Phase I Determination also included the following Vision Statement for Equity in Energy Efficiency:**

Energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective energy resources and has the potential to reduce energy burdens, cut carbon emissions, and promote community resilience. However, conscious effort is required to ensure that these benefits are conferred equitably among Connecticut residents. Equitable energy efficiency programs will:

- Alleviate high energy burdens for low-income and underserved households
- Recognize and remediate past harm by prioritizing historically under-resourced communities
- Mitigate and eliminate barriers to low- to moderate-income participation in energy efficiency programs
- Drive accessible and transparent process to incorporate residents’ priorities and lived experiences into program design and decision-making
- Ensure equitable access to the benefits of energy efficiency

The first Recommendation in the Phase I Determination calls for the hiring of a diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant (DEI Consultant) to review the current state of equity in C&LM programs and propose recommendations to align programs with the E3 Vision Statement for Equity in Energy Efficiency. Once the DEI Consultant is onboarded, implementation of the Phase I Recommendations will be underway.

## 2022 WORK SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The activities outlined below represent the scope of work and responsibilities of the DEI Consultant for the first year of their contract (2022). The Energy Efficiency Board and Consultant Committee will develop scopes of work for 2023 and 2024 with assistance from the DEI Consultant prior to contract renewal.

### **Consult on the development of new equity metrics**

1. Analyzing findings of the utility-driven data collection on program participation and energy reduction across various E3 recommended dimensions.
2. Developing systems to track energy efficiency supplier diversity and metrics to promote a diverse supplier pool.
3. Examining the current secondary equity metrics for the commercial and industrial (C&I) sector and consulting on the measurement and advancement of equity in the C&I sector.
4. Working with the EEB and DEEP to develop impactful equity goals/metrics based on above analysis.
5. Support a commitment to accountability on DEI goals by identifying relevant metrics, implementing assessment mechanisms for accountability, and communicating progress at regular intervals.

### **Consult on the design and implementation of community outreach strategies**

1. Monitor, and if needed, assist in the delivery of the Utilities' [Community Partnership for Energy Efficiency Engagement Initiative](#), which launched its first round of funding applications in July 2021.
2. Advise on the development of the utilities' Communities RFP outreach strategy, including:
  - a. Identifying underserved communities that should be targeted by the RFP
  - b. Ensuring the outreach strategy adds value over current approaches to help achieve stated program goals and metrics
  - c. Reviewing the RFP for ease of use and effectiveness in reaching targeted communities
3. Consult on the development of additional outreach strategies informed by the outcomes of the data tracking and metrics activities described above.
4. In coordination and consultation with the Evaluation Administrator, develop and assist in the delivery of surveys or focus groups to track:
  - a. Impacts of residential energy efficiency programs on customer hardship, quality of life, health, and other quantitative and qualitative non-energy impacts.
  - b. Barriers to access among renters and multifamily buildings, moderate-income households, and language-isolated households.

### **Maintain regular Board interaction and collaboration**

1. Attend monthly EEB meetings and Board Committee meetings as appropriate.
2. Present on progress and topics of interest as requested by the EEB during monthly meetings.
3. Consult on the development of the 2023 C&LM Plan Update, which the utilities will begin drafting in 2022 and submit for DEEP approval in November 2022.

## APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

### Core Qualifications

- A commitment to the mission and purpose of the CT Energy Efficiency Fund which seeks to (1) advance the efficient use of energy, (2) reduce air pollution and negative environmental impacts, and (3) promote economic development and energy security.
- Certified in Diversity, Inclusion and Equity or have more than five years of experience advising on or developing programmatic approaches to DEI. Examples of relevant certifications could include, but are not limited to, DEI certifications offered through associations or major universities, completion of programs offered through professional or leadership organizations, or the completion of any coursework or training program in DEI principles.
- Experience in energy efficiency programs, public policy, or other relevant fields; and in-depth knowledge on the topics or social movements of racial, environmental, climate, and energy justice or equity or other relevant fields.
- Demonstrated facilitation and communication skills along with experience working with multiple stakeholders.

### Preferred Qualifications

The EEB is looking for qualified candidates to fill the role of DEI Consultant. The following are examples of qualifying experience; it is not expected that any one candidate will have all:

- Experience examining Low and Moderate-Income (LMI) and DEI program efforts for the purpose of determining if the programs effectively serve customers in need, including customers in [environmental justice](#) (EJ) communities and/or historically underserved communities.
- Experience recommending innovative approaches and models for improving DEI participation in energy efficiency programs, or public programs that included addressing access and participation barriers.
- Experience providing policy analysis and technical assessment for electric and/or gas utilities and/or government agencies
- Experience working with energy efficiency advisory councils or similar public/community councils on an ongoing basis.
- Experience designing workforce development programs and pipelines, especially those that advance a pathway for fostering economic development in DEI customer communities.
- Experience developing multi-sector partnerships and developing multi-sector engagement forums focused on equity.
- Sophisticated in delivering sensitive messages in a culturally appropriate manner and helping build understanding and empathy among the Energy Efficiency Board.
- Ability to leverage resources, community relationships, and data to ensure involvement, support, and success for diversity, inclusion, and community engagement initiatives.
- Applicants from Black, Indigenous, People of Color, Women, non-native English speakers, and other people underrepresented in the energy efficiency workforce are encouraged to apply.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should submit a proposal including: qualifications, prior experience, two references, a response to the “Work Scope and Responsibilities” detailed above with an explanation of how the applicant plans to fulfill those responsibilities, and a proposed budget for each of the three years and in total with hourly and total compensation, estimated expenses, estimated administrative and support hours, overhead and/or management costs (if applicable), and 6% business service tax on labor (only for Connecticut residents who are consultants). Please limit proposals to 10 pages for individual consultants and 15 pages for more than one consultant (the page limit does not include supporting reference materials such as resumes, project experience, budget details, etc.). Proposals should address team leadership and how the DEI Consultant proposes to interact with other program consultants. Applicants must not have any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy, the Yankee Gas Company, The United Illuminating Company, Connecticut Natural Gas, or Southern Connecticut Gas. Bidders should review the [EEB Operating Procedures](#) to assure they understand the requirements of the Operating Procedures as they relate to the roles and responsibilities of the DEI Consultant.

## RFP INFORMATION

### Payment Procedure

The DEI Consultant shall submit invoices on a regular basis to the EEB Consultant Committee. A separate invoice reflecting each company’s share will be prepared for the company’s Accounts Payable Department and supplied to the Company representatives and the Steering Committee. A brief written recap, by date, of activities of the DEI Consultant will also be provided on a regular basis as part of the invoicing procedure.

### RFP Terms

This RFP does not commit the EEB to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to the RFP, or to procure or contract for services. The EEB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any or all qualified Contractors, or to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in their best interest to do so. The EEB reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals, to waive any minor irregularities or informalities in a proposal, and to enter into any agreement deemed by EEB to be in the best interest of the ratepayers of the State of Connecticut. The EEB may enter into agreements with one or more of the applicants. The EEB reserves the right to discuss with the selected applicant(s) any terms and conditions, including financial issues, for any proposed project.

The contract terms and conditions for each Utility will be posted on the RFP page of the EEB website. RFP responses should include either acceptance of the terms and conditions, or a written response on any exceptions to them. The Utilities will determine whether the exceptions can be accommodated.

## Reporting

Selected applicant(s) will report directly and solely to the EEB, including submitting regular invoices to the EEB Consultant Committee for review and approval. The EEB reserves the right to discuss with the selected applicant(s) any terms and conditions, including financial issues, for any proposed project.

It is estimated the responsibilities of the DEI Consultant will occupy roughly 40 hours per month, not including travel time (if any, when needed). In keeping with state COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, the EEB has been conducting virtual meetings for the past several months; however, there is a possibility that hybrid meetings (providing both in-person and virtual attendance options) will resume in the near future. When this happens, the Consultant will be expected to attend meetings in-person when called upon to do so.

## Service Period

Consulting services within this RFP are for up to 3 years, beginning in February 2022 and ending on December 31, 2024, with the understanding that the DEI Consultant will be evaluated annually and the EEB will have the option to renew or refuse to renew the contract on an annual basis. Proposals should include pricing information for each year (2022, 2023, 2024) and in total. Proposals should include annual scopes of work starting in February 2022 through December 2022 as well as for years 2023 and year 2024.

## RFP TIMELINE

The timeline for the RFP is as follows:

Publication of RFP	November 17, 2021
Intent to bid due	December 3, 2021, by 4:00 p.m.
Questions on RFP due	December 10, 2021 by 4:00 p.m.
Answers to questions provided	December 17, 2021
Proposals due	January 5, 2022, by 4:00 p.m.
Interviews conducted	January/February 2022
Selection decision	February 2022

All questions or correspondence regarding this RFP should be sent in writing to Emily Rice, EEB Executive Secretary, at [ExecutiveSecretaryCTEEB@theenergygroup.biz](mailto:ExecutiveSecretaryCTEEB@theenergygroup.biz).

The intent to bid and questions on the RFP shall be submitted in writing via email to the EEB Executive Secretary. All questions and answers will be provided to all respondents who indicated an intent to bid (answers shall be developed by the EEB Consultant Committee) and posted on the RFP page of the EEB website. All proposals should be submitted to the Executive Secretary via email.

Respondents who do not submit an intent to bid by December 3, 2021 can still submit proposals, but they will not be able to submit any questions on the RFP after December 10, 2021.